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In This Issue

CARL KNUDSEN
"The Final Evidence for Religion"

KING D. BEACH
"The Christian in an Unchristian World"

JOHN A. MacCALLUM
"Each and All"

A. T. DeGROOT
"The Carpenter Becomes the Christ"

E. G. HOMRIGHAUSEN
"Because of Our Unbelief"

HENRY W. SNYDER
"So This Is College!"

EDGAR BLAKE
"Why Armaments?"

CLAUDE ALLEN McKAY
"A Pastoral Prayer"

PREACHER PROBLEMS

JOHN A. McAFEE
"The Ministerial Mien"

The Final Evidence For Religion

BY CARL KNUDSEN

In him we live and move and have our being. Acts 17:19-34.

A VERY common stumbling block to spiritual insight and experience is the tendency to overemphasize the religious importance of scientific progress. We are told that the giant souls of the first century would find themselves strangely out of place if they should return to the world of our time. A bewildering assortment of mechanical gadgets would force them into a helpless wonderment as they confronted the issues of life. As a matter of fact, our scientific progress has in no way repealed the fundamental laws of human relationships and spiritual redemption. Our mechanical appliances should give us more freedom to cultivate the spiritual nature within us and they may have other incidental bearings on our moral and spiritual problems, but in a deep and abiding sense there is no real change in the essential needs of men nor in the divine answer to those needs. "The heavens," according to Isaiah, may "vanish away like smoke and the earth wax old like a garment but my salvation shall be forever and my righteousness shall never be abolished."

A striking example of this common bond which unites the generations is seen in the appearance of the apostle Paul in the city of Athens. When we examine his observations and experiences in that famed capital of ancient culture we feel very much at home. We know that if the immortal crusader for Christ should come to the Athens of America he would find substantially the same spiritual hungers, the same pathetically misguided ventures for the way of life, the same vital need of the soul for God. Boston, for instance, like Athens, allows full freedom for the religious worshiper. The old Grecian metropolis had its Parthenon with the images of all known gods carved thereon. Many strange cults appeared in Athens and lest some god should be over-

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looked, some spiritual truth neglected, an enterprising soul had led the city fathers to erect an altar "To the Unknown God."

IN OUR CONFUSED TODAY

The effect of this general dispersion of religious interest was necessarily similar to that which we note in our own land in these twentieth century times. There is the anxious questioning regarding the final certainties of faith. The wayfaring man asks: "With so many churches and so many man-made creeds how can I know the truth? Are these religions after all merely the expression of opinion and individual conviction on the part of ordinary men? If so, how can anyone be certain of the truth? Here is the Catholic Church claiming infallibility for the Pope and asserting that the Pope's version of religion is communicated directly from God. Here are Protestant churches asserting a doctrine of "the priesthood of all believers" and claiming that any Christian ranks with the Pope in his capacity to receive revelations from on high. To be sure, the Protestant explains that our intuitions must be checked and verified by the position of Scripture, but then again Scripture is open to various interpretations by equally sincere human minds.

The reply to eager questioners regarding the varieties of religious insights and experiences is that the differences hinge upon nonessentials while the underlying foundations of faith are very much the same. The individual is not dependent upon his own elusive surmises regarding the ultimate facts of faith. He is supported by a great body of tradition dating much farther back than the first century, recorded in secular as well as in sacred history and literature, and bearing witness that not only in Athens but everywhere men are in all things very religious. All great souls are glad to be familiar with this revelation from the past. All who seek earnestly the way of life are also zealous to know the disclosures that come to their fellow men in the present. Such knowledge saves us much unnecessary travail and suffering and anxiety. The power to draw upon the past and to project one's self into the future, and live in terms of both is one of the chief blessings that separate men from lower creatures. By this means a boy of five may know more about life and God than a strictly independent man could possibly know at the age of one hundred.

NATURE AS EVIDENCE OF GOD

Upon this vast reservoir of religious thought and revelation Paul drew his material for his historic sermon on Mars Hill. There was first of all his allusion to nature. "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands." The allusion to nature and its wonders is even more impressive in our day for we know more about the miracles of creation. The telescope sweeps the heavens and the microscope penetrates the tiny universes at our feet. We are led with the most accomplished scientists of our time to stand in wonder and in awe of the One who is creator of indescribable beauty, and the administrator of a universe of incredible magnitude, interdependence and orderliness. We like to follow Thoreau in spirit as h stands for hours watching the fog descend on the rive or seeing the stars come out of the evening sky or listen ing to the mystic waves as they move from out th soundless deep and then turn again home. We like t stand beside a quiet lake and see the moon ascend in th distant horizon and then send its path across the placi waters to our feet. Wherever we go along the shore i seems that this shimmering light on the lake comes di rectly from the moon to us. We are reminded ther that in this ample creation the individual is not neces sarily lost. Even we, perhaps, may have a place in thi universe of miracle and of beauty.

But the apostle does not leave the Athenians with a Grand Perhaps. It is not enough for man to know that there is a wondrous housekeeper and engineer who presides over this creation. He is still left with the greatest questions unsettled and unsolved. What is his part in the universal plan? What should be his relationship to the Creator? Is the One who plans creation also planning something for the highest of his creatures? Is his purpose to bring into being a family of men and women after his own heart with whom he can have fellowship and with whom he may labor for a high destiny? If so, how shall we find his will and his way? Nature with all its overwhelming glories is silent on this central question. Paul now moves on to higher ground: "God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth." Here is the evidence of social ethics. Man is aware of an ethical ideal to which he must conform his life. He is not to live as a self-seeking individualist; he is to live as a member of a family whose home is the world and whose Father is God.

MAN'S SENSE OF OUGHTNESS

The force of idealism in the life of mankind is hardly to be overrated and its evidential value in the realm of faith cannot easily be overstressed. When we consider the original nature of the creature-man that we are, the struggle between the real and the ideal is all the more impressive. Man in his natural state is ruled by emotions of the moment and he does not stop to consider the effect of his action on future character or on the welfare of others. His purpose is to satisfy all his hungers and to protect his life from assault. But there comes into the minds and souls of men the realization that life is more than meat and the body more than raiment. There is within him a spiritual nature that craves for expression. There is within him a faint glimpse of an ideal. Living for himself does not bring lasting satisfaction to the spiritual nature of which he is aware. Within him there is a compelling conviction that the life of Christ is a pattern of God's choosing. He may not be able to explain this conviction for it is beyond the category of logical deduction. He only knows that Christ's spirit is the only spirit which is coherent with the best which is within him.

How does this sense of oughtness, this "capacity to live by an inner non-coercive authority," to quote Georgia Harkness, register in the field of morals? The most obvious effect on the Christian is to shift his center of spiritual gravity from himself to God. That is, he

learns to judge his own actions not by what will benefit himself nor by what will please his neighbors but by that which coordinates with the spirit of the Christlike God. We must remember that any force that can accomplish this end in a human life is a very real power.

ROCK BOTTOM REALITY IN MAN

All students of human nature are agreed that two of the most insistent and deep-rooted motives in men are those of self-preservation and social approval. The first is probably the more elemental of the two and unites men with all the creature world. Natural man will

CARL KNUDSEN

often sacrifice social approval, if necessary, to preserve his life. A majority of men will break laws of almost any description to secure a livelihood if legitimate channels for remuneration are closed. A very strong minority of men will, however, display an extremely powerful sensitivity to social approval. The soldier on the field of battle, the life-saver on the seashore, the policeman, the fireman and the medical practitioner will often risk their lives gladly in heroic endeavor to save others. Men on the Titanic were glad to surrender their life belts to peasant women and jump to certain death rather than take to safety at the cost of social disgrace. Public servants will often give their fortunes and their utmost strength for a cause which is plainly one of mercy and of common welfare. Many will admit upon close questioning that their salaries or their other emoluments are only incidental; their chief motive is to win the respect and the love of the populace. There are few prizes in life more alluring or more potent than the prize of popular approval.

When, therefore, we see a God-motivated man who can overcome both these terrific forces, the motive of self-preservation and of social approval, we are in the presence of rock bottom reality. These great souls, many obscure and unknown, are to be found in every walk of life. When, back in 1917, the storm of hatred and militarism, whipped up by commercial interests and yellow journalism, tore like a cyclone into the halls of Congress, and demanded war against Germany, six brave senators stood out with utter disregard for their own safety. Looking beyond the hysteria of the populace they saw their nation being pulled into the mad inferno by sinister forces of selfishness parading under the guise of patriotism. They knew that the voice of the people was not the voice of God and they cast their vote with their conscience and with their God. Conscientious objectors to war displayed this same spirit of farsighted heroism during the conflict. They walked in the footsteps of God's noblemen of peace who serve on every front.

There are schoolteachers who follow the gleam and lead their pupils in fields where no feet have trod. Not content to echo and re-echo ancient shibboleths and to keep within the orbit of popular opinion they risk trouble in the interest of a high cause. Likewise, some attorneys spend their energies defending oppressed and denounced classes; some college students stand like lions against debilitating customs of their fraternities; some mothers eschew popularity of the moment by spurning the gambling and drinking and adulterous conventions of their neighborhood circles. Like Peter of old all such lonely heroes of the world are saying, "We must obey God rather than man."

WORSHIP AND PRAYER

No one can reasonably doubt that this evidence of ethical heroism is convincing evidence for the life of God in the soul of man. Certainly a power greater than the elemental power of self-preservation and social approval is at work. Experience shows, moreover, that this spiritual power to live above the world even while one lives most vitally for the world, is a power which is deepened as one is drawn near to the heart of God. Worship and prayer make clearer this other world of which we are already a part and sends us back to our task with the knowledge and the secret realization that we are arm in arm with a Power not ourselves which fights at our side.

But a household is not a home because there is ethical uprightness there. There may be moral sternness and staunchness there but this does not fill the deep void in the soul. It is loving companionship that makes the house an abiding place for the spirit. A child comes home in the evening with joy in his heart, not because he is sure that mother and father are there or because he is certain of their puritanical principle but because he is assured of their loving interest in all he has been doing. He wants to tell of his accomplishments for the day and consciously or unconsciously wants the deep sympathy, understanding and comradeship which only his loving parents can give. Likewise, man's soul is never quite at home in the universe merely because he is convinced that there must be a Creator-God or that the eternal Father is infinitely just and righteous in all

his ways. The great need of the soul is for a cosmic companion. When one sees a man who lives by the power of the loving and sustaining friendship of God, he is in the presence of the final evidence for religion. "He is not far from any one of us," says Paul, "for in him we live and move and have our being." All uncertainty and all bewilderment vanish when we find this unshakable foundation of faith. There will be questions about many details of theology and of policy but the basic certainty that upholds all things will be ours.

A MODERN SAINT

Dr. S. Parkes Cadman was one of the greatest souls who ever graced a Congregational pulpit in America. I like to think of him the last time I saw him at our last National Council. Massive of thought and with a heart as big as the world he poured out his soul in a platform deliverance of rare spiritual power. In private conversation he was democratic and sympathetic toward the humblest brother Christian who sought his counsel and helpfulness, or only his friendliness. He could take us into his mind and heart with ease, so complete was our admiration and our esteem toward him. But what of those who did not and could not share his Protestant ardor and outlook? The answer to our question is to be found in the recorded remarks of his nurses in St. Elizabeth's Hospital, in Plattsburg, New York. In his fatal illness the great preacher of the gospel had been rushed there. His suffering was prolonged and intense. Through it all his spirit was absolutely triumphant. Not once did he lose his kindliness toward those who served him; not once did his radiance and fortitude fail him; not once did he lose his buoyancy of spirit and his godliness of heart. When others wept he steadied them with his quiet trust. His eternal nature was already asserting its victory over the flesh. When the great transition had been made a nurse exclaimed, "Never in all my life did I see anyone like him." She had seen God manifested in the life of man. She could understand how the centurion felt at Calvary when, standing in the presence of all that remained of the crucified one, he cried: "Surely, this was the Son of God."

CONVINCING EVIDENCE

St. Teresa was once questioned by a skeptic who doubted her experience with God. "How do you know," he asked, "that you are not the victim of an hallucination?" Her reply was quite convincing: "You may tell me that I see visions and dream dreams. When the vision has vanished and I have nothing but a story to tell your version is as good as mine. But when my divine visitor leaves me treasure then I know that he is real, for the treasure is with me and I share it with you." She referred to the treasure of joy, courage and peace which was hers because she had kept her tryst with God.

"Religion," says a modern seer, "like good music needs not argumentation so much as rendition." The greatest experience before us, the greatest upsurge of spirit open to us, comes when we move from the periphery to the center of our relationship with God and know him not merely as the creator of our world and as the embodiment of the highest goodness, but as our eternal companion and friend. "He is not far from any one of us." We may know him as the great source of triumph in everyday life. We may serve as his living epistles on earth. We may in a measure reveal him to a world that cries out for a sign. For "in him we live and move and have our being."

The Christian in an Unchristian World

By King D. Beach

Children of God . . . in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye are seen as lights . . . holding forth the word of life. Philippians 2:15.

A CROOKED and perverse generation!" In such devastating phrase does Paul pass judgment upon the civilization of his day. It is a condemnation characteristic of prophets since the time of Jesus. Whenever Christianity has been virile and true, its devout people have been conscious of an acute tension between Christian ways and other ways. For most of us Paul's indictment stands also against the civilization of our day. We live in a "crooked and perverse generation."

It would be easy to draw up an imposing list of gains, even of moral gains, which have been won since the time of Paul. Strange as it may seem, the fact that an unemployment problem persists over a period of years is a sign of advance. In the days of Paul, except when Roman voters could be bought by bread and blood, a dispossessed group without material resources remained a "problem" only a few months—that is, only long enough to starve. We, at least, do not let people starve *en masse*.

A civilization, however, that numbers its depressed classes by millions in the most favored countries during prosperous periods, permitting them to be stalked by insecurity, dependency, unemployment and fear; a civilization that maintains group pressures in favor of gambling, drunkenness and profligacy; that worships the state and sacrifices human victims on its altars; that separates the nations into hating armed camps and creates savage animosities between races; that destroys the products of agriculture when children cry for food, and limits manufactured articles when multitudes are destitute; that glorifies the incredible but accepted business theory that individual self-seeking, by some strange necromancy, results in public well-being—such a civilization still deserves the biting description, "a crooked and perverse generation."

The Christian is part of such an unchristian world. Few of us can resort to hide-outs in a desert or in a South Sea Island, thus escaping the evils we deplore. Few of us can be Bill Simpsons. We are Christians, committed to Jesus Christ, yet we live in an unchristian civilization. Without trying now to agree regarding the precise extent to which it is unchristian, we all recognize that, in serious measure, our world is pagan.

The Christian is more than living in this unchristian civilization: he is also, even though his commitment to

Christ is thoroughgoing, definitely involved in its unchristian elements. Whenever one uses a manufactured product he is conniving with pagan elements in our society. Who can find one product manufactured, advertised and distributed completely in accordance with Christian principles? Every time we wear shoes, walk on pavement, use an automobile, trolley car or railroad train, eat a meal or comb our hair, we are in some measure implicated in an industrial and commercial organization which violates Christian standards. This is true not merely of laymen but also of preachers. It is a saving grace if preachers say to business men, "We are all miserable sinners" rather than "Thou art the man." It adds greatly to realism in sermon and worship if we frankly recognize that all Christians are involved in an unchristian world and are making constant compromise with it.

What, then, are followers of Christ to do in such a world? Can we be Christian when we are clearly implicated in a "crooked and perverse generation"? Must we give up the effort to follow Jesus as hopeless? Or can we yet meet an involved situation honestly enough and effectively enough to be partly worthy of the name Christian? Let us consider what we can do.

I

First, we can refuse to be reconciled to things as they are and can hold fast our dreams of the kingdom of God established both in the hearts and the institutions of men. To keep our dreams clear and fresh involves much. When Dr. Alfred Salter was in this country last year, he opened an address in the Emergency Peace Campaign with a dark picture of European conditions. In rapid succession he presented disturbing facts which seemed to make war inevitable. He next spoke of efforts to create friendly relations between the nations. Then, apparently interrupting his prepared speech, he asked: "But is there after all any hope? Is it possible that these fragile efforts will produce peace?" "Well," he hesitatingly continued, "well, that depends upon your philosophy of life, upon whether or not you believe in the supremacy of spiritual forces." Then he went on to declare a profound Christian faith which gave him hope in a dark hour. That is it, exactly. To keep hope of a righteous world we must keep faith in a righteous God.

In those fugitive years when Lenin was plotting against the tsarist government, he addressed many proclamations and communications to his Russian associates. Again and again this avowed atheist included in his words of encouragement such sentences as, "We are sure to be victorious because our cause is just." Now, in his formal utterances Lenin denied all religion and all gods, and cursed them roundly; but in practice he, like many others, had to be better than his philosophy and his denials. A sternly logical man, he was here untrue to his logic. Neither he nor his associates could quite keep going without some inarticulate faith that in this world the just cause, as they considered it, has a better chance than the unjust cause. And in that confidence is seed of much religion.

To keep hope of achieving higher levels, to refuse to be reconciled to evil conditions, to escape becoming calloused and cynical and hardhearted, to continue confidence in goodness and justice and God in the midst of bombardments of pagan ideas is an achievement requiring the attentive use of all our intellectual and spiritual powers.

II

A second practicable task for Christians in an unchristian world is to lay hold of the many handles that life holds out by which they can help lift the world skyward; to accept responsibility for some work which God wants done, and, without expectation of honor or reward, to do their best for God and man.

King D. Beach

Life offers such handles in profusion. Daily work, special interests, a chance association, a church, some social agency, some "concern" presents us with an unfairness to be righted, a victim to be helped, an injustice to be battled, an ethical standard to be lifted, a moral issue to be decided, or an ideal to be brought to earth and incorporated in flesh and steel.

To illustrate: Herbert Spencer was once observed by a shopkeeper who refused to rectify the wrong. The outraged philosopher made it his business personally to picket the shop relentlessly, warning customers that the proprietor was dishonest. An ordinary business transaction provided him an instance of injustice; he concluded that this knowledge placed him under responsibility to his fellow men and to English integrity and he spent himself, dispassionately and disinterestedly, to provide a remedy.

There is good battling on every front and all along the line. Many factors will determine where Christians lay hold to create a more Christian world. Their tasks

and their methods will vary according to interests, information, background and temperament. Moreover, with the spiritual development of the years and with the growing realization of what Christ's truth entails and his fellowship reveals, our tasks change and our work develops.

It is too frequently assumed that it makes little difference what or how we work so long as we do work. On the contrary, as Christians we are obligated not merely to give our fullest efforts, but also to give them efficiently and effectively. Otherwise we may bring results that are the opposite of what we desire and purpose. Slovenly, illogical plans and efforts have no place in noble enterprises. Our generation has achieved much in knowledge, in learning facts; we need, if we are to survive, to achieve much in wisdom, in the interpretation of facts and of life. In this accomplishment, Christians must lead.

There is much failure at the point of our personal efforts. We lose spiritual health because we break the normal connection between aroused feelings and motor actions. We short-circuit sympathetic impulses into emotional blowouts and excuse ourselves for indolence with dreadful ease. We are stirred, and do nothing about it. Our inner self takes spiritual and even physical revenge for such mishandling.

As Christians we also lose a major source of assurance of God because we fail to dare great tasks for God. Recently in trying to discover the spiritual secret of Kagawa, Sweitzer, Grenfell and C. F. Andrews, I was struck with the realization that each of these great Christians when uncertain of God found him again and more completely in undertaking some strangely daring enterprise for God.

Who can forget those three Hebrew youths who defied King Nebuchadnezzar, refusing to bow down to his graven image, whether or not God delivered them from the burning fiery furnace? The climax of the account was reached not when they walked unharmed in the midst of the furnace heated "seven times more than it was wont to be heated"; but rather when even a heathen king discerned that in their noble defiance of king and death God walked with them.

III

A third present-day accomplishment possible to Christians in a "crooked and perverse generation" is that, in addition to our own tasks, we can give encouragement to others in their efforts to build the kingdom of God. This means much because our utmost accomplishments are so trifling that, if limited to them, our contribution to Christ and his kingdom seems nothing.

We can help others catch the vision splendid and, in discouraged hours when they are beaten down, give them understanding lifts. A word fitly spoken or written can turn February into June. Why are we so dull in understanding and so dumb in expression? Why are we so often the victims of loathsome jealousy? Why are we so absorbed in our own minor part in the enterprise? Why are we so prejudiced that we consider that our task alone is important and our method alone correct? Two Christians, one far to the right and one far to the left, may yet honor one another's purpose even when each challenges the position of the other; and, if the two retain sympathetic relationships, they may achieve interchanges of ideas which are of inestimable value to both. Jesus knew what he was about when he sought to inculcate humble-mindedness in his followers and to make them unconcerned about deferences and chief places. He also dug deeply when he said, "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward." The role of the encourager is one that the least can undertake.

A Christian is responsible to God not merely for what he can personally do, but also for what he can inspire and help others to do.

He is responsible, in addition, for the group action which he can advance. What a field is here! One of the serious defects in our organization of society is that group encouragements and pressures too often influence people to do what is meaningless and even repugnant to them, in the hope that they may thereby qualify for some clan to which they aspire. Our task is to employ those sanctions in noble objectives.

IV

There is yet a fourth achievement possible to a Christian today. It is even the most important. In the midst of "a crooked and perverse generation" the Christian can give living demonstration of the spirit and attitude of Jesus.

In *Saint Joan* Bernard Shaw, that genius alternately so discerning and so disappointing, has given us a deep-plowing incident. It is in the last scene, when the characters were brought back to stage long after death. The stodgy English chaplain, somewhat astray in the wits, recalled only partially the death of Joan, in which he had so mean a part, and even had forgotten her name. But he declared that the tragedy saved him. He is asked: "Were not the sufferings of our Lord Jesus enough for you?"

"No—oh no—not at all," he answered. "I had seen them in pictures and read of them in books, and was greatly moved by them, as I thought. But it was no use. It was not our Lord that redeemed me but a young woman whom I saw burned to death. It was dreadful —Oh most dreadful. But it saved me."

Then followed this penetrating, disconcerting question addressed to the chaplain: "Must there be a Christ perish in torment in every age to save those who have no imagination?"

The answer that we must add is, "Yes." Unless in each generation the sacrificial spirit of Jesus is reincarnated in some of his followers, his passion is discounted and well nigh forgotten. Let no one think that he can follow Jesus without sacrifice. This "crooked and perverse generation" will today bring Gethsemanes and perhaps Golgothas to clear-thinking sincere followers of the Christ. Christian principles and attitudes do work, but they work for Christian objectives not for prideful selfish objectives. In the midst of poverty and sorrow and defeat, and also in what the world calls success and happiness, do we make manifest today in the flesh the mind and the spirit of the Christ?

In one of Paul's greatest chapters, the eighth of Romans, the apostle lifts his readers unto the heights. He

describes the superior equipment of those who are no longer "under the law." He rejoices that he and his readers no longer live under dread of the lash in servile fear. "His spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are sons of God. And if sons then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ." But, strangely, this elevated song of joy does not end on this high level. To this music is added a violently discordant note. "Provided," the same sentence continues, "that we share his sufferings that we may also share his glory." Provided that we make our own the "fellowship of his sufferings" in the pain and suffering and sin of his children, we shall know his sonship.

I have a private opinion that when Paul wrote the words of the text he was picturing in his mind the Colossus of Rhodes, that great statue of Helios, with a beacon light in uplifted hand. We know that Paul touched Rhodes in his journeys. If his family was, as usually thought, engaged in shipping, he as a boy may have seen Rhodes, situated as it was within easy reach of Tarsus by coasting vessel. The Colossus had fallen before Paul's day, but recumbent it continued to hold the imagination of the ancient world. Picture this Colossus—this Statue of Liberty of the ancient world holding forth a beacon to guide vessels into the harbor of Rhodes—as you again ponder the text: "Children of God in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation among whom ye are seen as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life." A Christian a Colossus of Rhodes, lifting high a light which is the word of life!

Each and All

By John A. MacCallum

One star differeth from another star in glory. I Corinthians 15:41.

FROM time immemorial man has surveyed the heavens and tried to trace the courses of the stars. He has striven to find a cosmos in the chaos of the night. Two motives have urged him to this difficult task. The first was curiosity which is the mainspring of so much of our knowledge and the second was the belief that, in some mysterious way, his individual destiny was associated with the movements of the heavenly bodies. His fate was determined by their position at his birth or when he engaged in an enterprise of unusual hazard.

We take so much of our knowledge for granted that it is extremely difficult for us to realize by what slow and painful processes it has been built up. Age after age shepherds upon the Mesopotamian plains and the deserts of Arabia, or in the valley of the Nile, studied the stars during their long night watches while they were guarding their sleeping flocks against the possible depredations of robbers or beasts of prey. Gradually these rude pioneers of discovery worked out a measure of order in the stellar movements and, though their explanations of these movements were crude and inadequate, they are nevertheless prodigiously important, since they form the nuclear center from which modern astronomy has grown.

How much of their knowledge was shared by St. Paul we are not in a position to say. We can only guess that as a man of native intelligence he held the moderately enlightened opinion of his time upon such matters. Because of his religious training he doubtless accepted the traditional belief that the stars were lights which God had placed in the sky for man's benefit, to speed him on his way when the sun had gone to sleep below the earth's western rim. Certainly he knew nothing of their chemistry or of astronomy in the modern sense. Galileo and his telescope were still centuries in the future as were also Newton with his gravitation and Einstein with his relativity. But, however limited Paul's technical knowledge of astronomy, we are probably safe in assuming that no traveler of his time found greater peace and joy in looking up into the heavens in that clear eastern air. As he moved from city to city to proclaim the gospel of which he was not ashamed, often the vicissitudes of the journey forced him to go on by night. Whether he was upon a mountain path or pacing the deck of a vessel on the Aegean Sea, no hour of the day brought him such delight as when the stars began to twinkle in the evening sky. Then his heart was filled with awe similar to that of Immanuel Kant many centuries after. Doubtless he could not tell why one star differed in its brightness from another. But he knew that such was the fact and that fact gave him a key to the solution of a problem upon which he had pondered often and long.

ST. PAUL INTERESTED IN MEN

After all, Paul was only incidentally interested in stars. He was, however, tremendously interested in men. As one star differs from another star in glory, so one man differs from another. This is a basal plank in his philosophy. He amplifies it time and again in his letters. But to Paul there is nothing discouraging in a fact which is so at variance with the wish-fancies of the equalitarian. Everyone has a work to do or would have it to do in a just social order. Some tasks are more conspicuous than others. In the faithful discharge of the task lies his reward even though others, in their ignorance of life's higher values, may treat him with indifference or scorn. There is no essential work however menial that does not shine with a modest and heavenly radiance.

> Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws
> Makes that and the action fine.

Was Paul right or was he wrong in this implicit declaration of the inequality of men? This is a legitimate question. Because he said a thing does not make it true nor would he have us believe him on that ground alone. Rather he would have us see the truth that he discloses in its own self-evidencing light. So long as men believe or profess to believe without comprehension, their religion will be devoid of stability and intellectually sterile. The chief reason for theological reaction and for the growth of cults and sects in this country is the fact that large numbers of people are unschooled in the principles of the Christian faith. Unless one's understanding grows out of a deep subsoil of knowledge he is likely to harbor the seeds of any strange

doctrine in his mind. The only way in which we can be sure of our ground in any opinion we hold, even though it is derived from the Bible, is to test it in the crucible of our experience. If it fails of confirmation by that trial, it is of no present value for us even though it be true. Truth that is not verifiable in our thought and action is of only academic significance and cannot be fundamental as a way of life.

ARE MEN "FREE AND EQUAL"?

Yet opposed to this position of St. Paul there stands the Declaration of Independence, affirming that "all men are created free and equal." This idea has become incorporated in the public mind and is revealed in the widespread decay of respect for age and authority, and in the lack of reverence for the higher types of personality. "One man's as good as another" is the vulgar affirmation of its underlying thought. It accounts for much of the feverish unrest which afflicts the social order of our day. So long as men who have not paid the price of achievement believe that they are as worthy as those who have toiled and disciplined themselves to reach the higher levels of attainment, there will be an excessive measure of friction in human relations. Nor is this a plea for the continuance of the existing social order. There are many inequalities that are not inherent and many wrongs that must be righted. But there is no more unhealthy attitude for a man to take than to allow his spirit to become inflamed by harboring the conviction that he has been treated unjustly because his rewards are not as large as those received by other men of inferior ability.

The truth is that the Declaration of Independence grew out of the exigencies of the time and was colored by political necessity. It was a protest against hereditary rank and special privilege. Certainly it did not express the historic position of many of the colonists. The Pilgrim Fathers were stout Calvinists and believed that from birth men are divided into two classes, the one predestined to eternal bliss; the other, to an equally interminable damnation. But while this clause of the Declaration stands as a historic assertion which served its purpose in its day and is still recited on patriotic occasions, few educated Americans have ever really believed it. "I am an aristocrat. I love justice and hate equality," said John Randolph, of Roanoke. This accounts for the casuistical and unconvincing explanations that are usually given when its truth is challenged.

HOW MEN ARE MADE

Paul was right. Men are neither equal in their heredity nor in their environment; or more simply, in their nature and nurture, the two creative and controlling forces that make them so largely what they are. In a word, heredity is what we start with. When the newborn babe rests in its mother's arms all that heredity can do has been done. But potentially there is a vast difference between two infants an hour old. The one may be a Shakespeare, a Bach, a Lincoln or an Einstein, while the other can never rise above the humblest station in life. This is due to the original difference in the germ plasm. It is difficult for the layman to see that heredity stops so abruptly because a good heredity is often, though by no means always, associated with a good environment. The latter is made up of all the forces that play upon the life of the infant, drawing out its latent powers and guiding them in this direction or in that. The mother, the father, home, religion, school, teachers, playfellows, books, music, pictures, the spirit of the age—in short, the entire *milieu* in which the child lives is his environment. It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of these molding influences upon its life. What would Shakespeare have done had he been born in nineteenth century Chicago; or Newton, if his father had been a New York banker of our day? Probably the poet would have been a popular clubman and the scientist a captain of industry. The place of Jesus himself in history is due to the fact that he came in "the fullness of time."

This explains why parents, by a sure instinct confirmed by the experiences of centuries, are so anxious to have their children attend the best schools and to give them every social and cultural advantage. Undoubtedly many a child of great native gifts is submerged under the grim pressure of sordid and disheartening surroundings. In large degree the differences between men are to be explained not by a superior or inferior heredity but by the fact that in their plastic years the one enjoyed advantages denied to the other. It is slovenly thinking to affirm that if a child has it in him he will rise to his native level. This is to deny the value of the very things with which those who can do so surround their children. Though an occasional breaker-boy may become a mine owner, it is undeniable that few can hope to escape the deadening effect of too early arduous toil. The insincerity of those who uphold the opposite view is proved by the care they take to guard their own children against early labor and the other frustrations of poverty. Because environments differ, men differ. They are artists and laborers, actors and mechanics, bankers and burglars, and so on through the entire vocational gamut.

GREAT MEN, AND ORDINARY

Thus we are justified in the conclusion that no certitude of human experience is more definitely established than wide variations in ability due to these two factors, heredity and environment. Even among those who achieve undying fame there are tremendous differences. Take the great religious leaders: Buddha, Confucius, Ikhnaton, Moses, Zarathustra, Jesus and Mohammed shine with a different intensity, varying according to time, place, destiny and the point of view of the observer. The same is true of poets, inventors, statesmen, architects, explorers, scientists and all others who achieved distinction in whatsoever sphere. Yet they are the shining ornaments of the tangled web of history. Their names brighten the past and cast a brilliant searchlight along the path of the future.

Alas! Is this not discouraging to ordinary mortals? Only in the rarest instances is it given to a man to shine with such luminosity as to attract the eye of his fellows in large numbers or for any length of time. Even the few who in their day achieve distinction are soon forgotten. Who knows the names of the popular preachers of Luther's day in Europe, or the social and other heroes of yesterday? The "best sellers" of two or three years

ago are already forgotten. As Southey said: "Fame has no present; popularity has no future." The undistinguished citizen may have, if he so desires, the morbid satisfaction of knowing that there is a stern democracy in the grave and that a few years after the decease of the financial, social and political leaders of his time, their stars shall have sunk below the horizons of memory.

But this is not the whole story. No man, however great, lives to himself alone or by himself. The President of the United States passes all his heavy hours in the glare of the ceaseless gaze of a hundred million eyes.

JOHN A. MACCALLUM

This, rather than innate power, is what makes his voice so far reaching and freights his every gesture with significance. Strip him of his office and he is reduced to ordinary size. Then, whatever unusual measure of attention his presence generates in any community is almost entirely due to the aura of his former glory which still invests his personality. Hence the light of the common man, so modest in its intensity that it can scarcely be distinguished from the dark, is blended with that of a multitude of his fellows and condensed into the white flames that play around a throne.

THE FACTOR OF DESTINY

There is a similar limitation in all human greatness, though outwardly it appears to be luminous by its own intrinsic light. As Tolstoy argued over a half century ago in *War and Peace,* even a Napoleon owes the glamour of his station to the countless lives that are around him, pushed and pulled hither and thither by forces they can neither explain nor control. Destiny is a word that covers our ignorance but it states the fact. Alexander, Hannibal, Washington, Napoleon—each in his time is the crest of a wave that could never have been except for the heaving deeps below. These are unseen and undreamed of by the superficial observer but apart from them no hero could win an immortal name. Even Shakespeare, who seems so unique and inexplicable, is but the climax of his age. Were it not for the dramatic ferment in the England of his day, its eager quest for knowledge, pleasure and adventure, his native talent would have had no soil in which to grow. Gray was indulging no idle play of his imagination when he declared that the rude tombstones of Stoke Poges sometimes marked the last resting places of men of mighty potencies:

> Hands, that the rod of empire might have swayed
> Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

They died inarticulate for fate did not permit them to meet their hour and the man and hour must meet before he can win renown or give full expression to his genius.

IMPORTANCE OF THE COMMON MAN

Were it not that there is a slumbering poet in every man, Homer, Dante and Shakespeare could never have won the attention of the world nor withstood the oblivion that like the hungry ocean seeks to engulf mankind. This is a law that applies without exception to all personal achievement. Back of Watt and Edison stands a line of pioneers reaching to the dawn of time, men who died in obscurity but who gave themselves with thoroughgoing enthusiasm to the promotion of knowledge and human welfare. Often they chose false trails but they charted them and guarded their successors against their mistakes. The world forgets these unknown seekers and with lavish hand bestows the credit that is their due upon those who entered into the inheritance they created. Perhaps there is no escape from this injustice, which Kipling described vigorously in his poem, "The Explorer." After this intrepid spirit has blazed a trail over the mountains, others follow, guided by the ashes of his campfires, and are called "the pioneers," while he who made their achievement possible is given no credit for his daring.

There is, however, an increasing recognition of the value of the unknown man in the modern world. The credit for the winning of the World War is not given to Foch alone, as it would have been in an earlier day, nor is it divided among the allied generals and admirals. The Unknown Soldier has a larger place than these outstanding leaders in the hearts of his countrymen, whether he rests at Arlington, in Trafalgar Square, or under the Arc de Triomphe. Science has revealed the differences in men and, therefore, their uniqueness and the necessity of their services. Every normal man has a necessary part to play. The stoker on an ocean liner is as essential as the captain, for without his labor the vessel would drift at the mercy of wind and wave. This does not make him equal to the captain, since his place can be more easily filled, but it should give him the appreciation of those he serves and the self-respect which grows out of the discharge of an important task.

Nor is there as much reason, as we sometimes think, for envying those who, whether by innate worth or

fortunate accidents of time and place, hold the highest stations of life. We have no means of measuring happiness but it is doubtful whether an unusual degree of worldly success brings an equal degree of contentment of mind. "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown" is a proverb that enshrines much more than royal experience. Men who have risen from obscurity to fame will nearly always confess that their delight was greater in anticipation than in realization, and that their most joyful memories often gather around their modest initial successes. To live in a house by the side of the road and let the world go by is not a high ambition but, if that is a man's destiny when he has done his best, he has small ground for complaint. He is probably happier than if his responsibilities were larger.

Another consideration should give consolation to those of humble position who bear the heavier burdens of life, the toilers of the land and sea. Who can be sure of the ultimate rating that they shall receive when "the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books are opened"? Anyone who has critical insight knows that many a blunder is made by the world in its appraisal of human worth. Often the quack or mountebank is welcomed as a hero, while the prophet is scorned by his contemporaries. Skillful though the ballet dancer may be or however clever the film artist or prizefighter, there is something topsy-turvy in a civilization that lavishes praise, attention and wealth upon such people and allows the man of superb mentality who dedicates his life to the alleviation of human suffering to do his work without adequate support and to die without recognition. Surely, if there is justice at the heart of the universe, it is not empty credulity to trust that by some means beyond our present ken provision will be made to redress such palpable wrongs.

EACH A PART OF THE WHOLE

Meantime there should be sufficient motive and no little satisfaction—enough to make life well worth living—in doing one's best in the situation in which he finds himself. To realize that I am an essential part in an infinite whole is no small source of joy. The orchid at its best is a rare and lovely flower, probably unsurpassed in the entire floral realm, but the earth would be much the poorer were it not for the pansy, the violet, the retiring lily of the valley, or the star of Bethlehem. Each is itself only on the background of the whole and the whole needs them all.

> All is needed by each one:
> Nothing is good or fair alone.
> I thought the sparrow's note from heaven,
> Singing at dawn on the alder bough;
> I brought him home in his nest at even;
> He sings the song but it cheers not now,
> For I did not bring home the river and sky:
> He sang to my ear, they sang to my eye.

So Emerson declared with lilting tongue and in his disappointment again he turned to nature with surer insight. Now he noted the ground-pine and club-moss beneath his feet, the fragrance of the violet, the oaks and firs, pine-cones and acorns, the soaring sky above, "full of light and of deity"; the rolling river and the morning bird; each was a part of the perfect whole. What immeasurable unrest embittering the souls of multitudes would be avoided if men could learn to find contentment in being their best selves without demanding the homage of their fellows!

"One star differeth from another star in glory." If St. Paul had been asked to indicate one of the brightest jewels in the sky he would probably have pointed to Venus, "fair star of evening, splendor of the west." Yet Venus is no star at all but only a little planet held in leash by a little sun, shining not in her own but by reflected light. This is not to ridicule Paul's judgment. He had not the information at his command that would enable him to make a surer choice. Betelgeuse and many another sun immeasurably larger than ours shine with only a moderate brightness when viewed with the naked eye by an observer upon the earth. Because Venus is so near to us she seems larger and brighter than heavenly bodies that could swallow her in their fiery oceans without any perceptible increase in their circumferences.

"YE ARE THE LIGHT"

Men are always making similar blunders in their estimates of human values. Those things which are nearer to their interests take on much larger proportions than many others of immensely greater merit. Pleasure, money, distinction, power—these are so close to them that they lose their perspective and become indifferent to such heavenly qualities as honor, truth, culture, ideals and religion. Because these seem farther away than the urgent necessities of the hour, or the immediate call of passion, they appear to possess only a dim effulgence. The Venus of immediate desire outshines the Betelgeuse of faith.

Perhaps it is too much to expect frail human beings to be content with their own radiance. After all, the soul's unrest is due to heavenly aspirations. We want to be more than we are, to do more than we have done or can do. Often our light is darkness, and how great is that darkness! Most of us would be in a sorry plight if there were no way by which our dubious luminosity can be reinforced. Again with Paul we can read our title in the skies. As Venus shines by the light of the sun, so the humblest men can shine by the light of Christ and become, in so doing, a light to guide the erring and reprove the sinful.

"I am the light of the world," said Jesus, but his corollary is equally true: "Ye are the light of the world."

Much human glory is illusory. Our standards of judgment are uncertain. Our time for correcting mistaken estimates of character is too short. Stars that today seem to be of the first magnitude will become secondary or fade out altogether. Others that are so dim as to be nebulous will grow in brightness in the telescopic vision of oncoming generations. Time reverses most contemporary judgments. But the Christian has a guarantee against these reversals. If, with the least reliance upon our own light, we take our stand in the light of Christ, in his justice, mercy and redemptive love, we shall have the joy of reflecting these radiant beams of personality as far as the orbit our influence extends.

The Carpenter Becomes the Christ

By A. T. DeGroot

IT is hard for us today to believe that once Jesus was to the church like homespun, country parents would be to their modern, new-rich, socially ambitious children. How many times have you heard some warm hearted and perhaps emotional disciple of our Lord exclaim: "Oh, to have lived when the apostles of old walked the earth, and to have heard from their lips the tales of their happy fellowship with Jesus!" We cannot but think that the gracious Galilean was always revered, as, for instance, the poet Sidney Lanier, revered him:

> But Thee, but Thee, O sovereign Seer of time,
> But Thee, O poet's Poet, wisdom's Tongue,
> But Thee, O man's best Man, O love's best Love,
> O perfect life in perfect labor writ,
> O all men's Comrade, Servant, King, or Priest—
> . . .
> Jesus, good Paragon, Thou Crystal Christ!

But this was not always the way the early church looked upon Jesus.

To put it in the harshest terms, there came a day when the Carpenter of Nazareth was a liability and not an asset to his ambitious disciples; he was a problem and not a paragon. Savior he was, perhaps; yet his lowly trade and lack of social distinction, his plebian origin from working-class parents, made him a stumbling block and a hindering embarrassment to the missionary heralds of the later Christian generations. "Is not this the carpenter?" asked the patricians and the ruling castes—and in the very question they spoke the unbelief of their time. How could a carpenter become the Christ? To suggest it was nothing less than absurd!

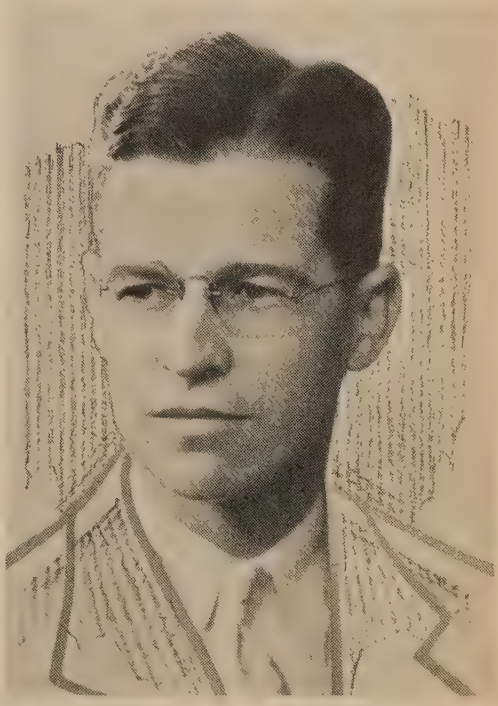
I

Before we judge too quickly these halting evangelists, these vacillating proclaimers of the good news, let us remember that Jesus was the only prophet of a great religion who dared to entrust its fate to the work-hardened hands of toiling men. Confucius was a scholar and a consort of princes. Buddha enjoyed the patronage of men of wealth. Mohammed's religion was promulgated under the protection of the merchant princes of Mecca. If the early disciples of Jesus should dare to hold before the world a workingman Christ, a toiling savior who placed his trust in fishermen, like James, in clerks like Matthew, then indeed it would be right to exclaim with the rabble at Thessalonica that here were men who were turning the world upside down. No laboring man could be a spokesman for God!

On this Labor day which we celebrate in the church of Jesus Christ, it is well to consider what a miracle it is that the carpenter has become the Christ. By the power of his might the status of labor has been changed from disgrace to honor. The laboring man Christ, being lifted up, has drawn a whole civilization unto him. What used to be a blight and an embarrassment is now a matter of pride—as the phenomenal growth of labor unions and workers' organizations in all of the great nations today so eloquently testifies. Leaders of labor, respected alike by their owner-rivals as well as by their organized followers, need only look across the oceans to lands where Christ is yet a stranger, to see the difference he has made for them. Wherever the Carpenter of Nazareth is known as the Christ, there the life of toil has become a badge of respectability.

II

It was not always so. Eusebius tells of two Jews who were brought before the Roman emperor Domitian, a persecutor of Christians. The men were charged with



A. T. DeGroot

being plotters against the empire on the grounds that they were descendents of David through the same family as Jesus, and were suspected of having messianic aspirations of their own. It did not take Domitian long to dismiss the case. Why, he said, look at these men's hands—they are calloused. They are not thinkers—they are farmers, workers! Such people are contemptible; they can plan no good nor plot any evil for the empire. This was the normal attitude toward laboring men in the Roman empire. To be a man of toil was to be despised by the rulers of the people.

When Jesus was born to Mary, let us remember in all humility that there was no day of rest for those who labored; no Lord's day anywhere, or Sabbath, except in little Judea. There was a *class* of rest, for the favored few. People were born into this class, and some forced their way in by strength in war. Nice people did not work—to do so was to fall into disgrace.

III

Jesus was born the earthly son of a small town carpenter, of a despised servant race. Perhaps the nearest possible parallel in our own country would be to think of him as coming to earth in some humble Negro cabin of our southland before the war between the States. He grew and waxed strong in the rigorous trade of Joseph. The silence of our New Testament concerning the years of his youth and young manhood may well be only a reflection of the silence and emptiness of all literature before the time of Christ concerning the workingman. He meant nothing to the true welfare of the state; progress came from masters, not servants. All workers were but servants—and many were lifelong slaves.

One has only to read some book like Friendlander's *Roman Life and Manners Under the Early Empire* to see why the ruling classes looked upon Christianity as an "odious superstition," the adherents of which were "hated for their enormities." Paul and the readers of his first letter to the Corinthians knew full well what was meant when the apostle wrote that "not many wise men" were called to discipleship in that day. Cicero was simply the spokesman for his age when he said: "All mechanics are engaged in an unworthy occupation, for nothing worthy of a freeman can be had in a workshop." Pliny has left a realistic first century picture of some Roman servants and slaves, who were Christians, and who arose very early on Sunday, stole away to a secret keeping of the Lord's memorial feast, and came back to the routine tasks of the day, which was not one whit different from any other day. Rome would have no carpenter for its Christ!

Thus it was that Jesus came to be a handicap to his ambitious disciples. Of all the occupations of men, that of the gentleman farmer, having the oversight of agriculture, alone was considered respectable. Paul's missions reached few rich. By his own admission, "not many mighty, not many noble" were called. But he gained adherents in the slums of Roman cities, and from the kitchens and slave rooms of proud palaces. How comforting it must have been to these depressed classes to hear the words of Jesus as Luke quotes them: "Woe unto you that are rich! . . . woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger." The Christian faith was sown in a world where rich men despised labor, and where workers were scarcely more than slaves or chattels.

IV

"The common people heard him gladly," said Mark, and when two centuries had passed a great host of lowly working people had gained a firm belief in Jesus. Something had to be done, or Christianity would undermine the empire. The strongest and shrewdest opponent of Christ whom the world ever has seen came forward to do battle with the new faith. His name was Celsus. There is scarcely a modern argument against the Christian religion which is not to be found in his ancient pages.

Celsus struck hard at the place where he knew he would shame new disciples, or near-disciples, the most. He hit at the laboring man, Jesus. Christians, he said, are people who worship a provincial rustic. You may read the very words of Celsus, centuries old, in which he reproached the Master for "being born in a village, and that not a Greek one, nor belonging to any nation widely esteemed, and being despised as a son of a poor working woman, and as having on account of his poverty left his own country to hire himself out in Egypt." "Jesus," said Celsus, "ended a most infamous life by a most miserable death"—the kind of death which was meted out to runaway slaves, or slaves who dared to testify in court against their masters. With scathing mockery he quotes the words of Jesus, asking the apostles not to tell the world that he was the long-awaited Messiah. Such a low-bred peasant could not be chosen of God! And who were the apostles, who dared to say that he was? They were the "very wickedest of tax-collectors and sailors," said Celsus. Their trades were enough to damn them down into the third century, when he wrote and preached against the Carpenter-Christ.

The very Bible that we read and revere today shows how the followers of Jesus in Celsus' time were shamed by the lowly status of their Lord. Origen, one of the fathers of the church, rose to battle the unbeliever. He said: "Nowhere in the gospels current in the churches is Jesus himself ever described as being a carpenter." Yet we read today in Mark 6:3 about the Carpenter-Christ. Celsus saw what had happened. He cried all the louder: "Christians have rewritten the gospel from its original form into a threefold and fourfold and manifold form and have remodeled it, so that they might be able to deny accusations." Yes, even our Bible suffered mutilation at the hands of some of the early Christians, because it embarrassed them to worship a workingman Savior.

V

It is one thing to lose a battle, but another thing to lose the whole war. It is one thing to hear what today is saying, but another thing to hear what the centuries tell. It was one decadent age which was ashamed of Jesus—the age of the great Roman State. Here was an empire built on slavery and cruel conquest. The common people were ruled and robbed by the great plunderers, the proud patricians who held their places by making the slaves believe they were born inferior and doomed to an endless servitude. The gods were against them. Only the rich, those who did not work, could win favor with Heaven.

Jesus changed all this. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work," he cried. His apostles after him echoed this good news. Philemon, the slave owner, was instructed to love Onesimus, the slave, as a brother—in Christ. A colony of heaven began to be formed on the earth.

It was almost too good to be true! When the church began to win its way, and rich as well as poor came under the spell of the gracious Galilean, some were not ready to own all of his humble disciples as brethren. The church was getting somewhere—but its toiling Christ was a handicap and an embarrassment!

Let us thank God for this fact—slaveries never last. In the long run, life has no use for loafers. The idle rich die of their own idleness; pampered sons and butterfly daughters destroy the hard-earned fortunes of

their industrious parents. It was a word for the ages when the Creator said to the first man, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." A whole generation or a whole nation may deny it—but that generation or that nation will perish. Life is built on labor. The best life is the most useful life. The Master of Men was a master workman in his own day. Even some communists of today, who do not like certain things about rich churches, and ministers who are afraid of offending the wealthy members, respect the Carpenter of Nazareth. Sarah Cleghorn's "Comrade Jesus" tells the story:

Thanks to St. Matthew, who had been
At massmeetings in Palestine,
We knew whose side was spoken for
When Comrade Jesus took the floor.

"Where sore they toil and hard they lie,
Among the great unwashed, there dwell I:—
The tramp, the convict, I am he;
Cold-shoulder him, cold-shoulder me."

By Dives' door, with thoughtful eye,
He did tomorrow prophesy:—
"The kingdom's gate is low and small;
The rich can scarce wedge through at all."
. . .
Ah, let no Local him refuse!
Comrade Jesus hath paid his dues.
Whatever other be debarred,
Comrade Jesus hath his red card.

VI

The fact remains, for all the world to see, that it was the Carpenter who became the Christ. God saw fit to choose a humble craftsman to be the vessel of his love. Without having to speak a word, the person of Christ glorifies the life of labor.

It is no accident that of all the Presidents of the United States, Abraham Lincoln is probably the most loved. The store-keeping rail splitter from Illinois is closest to the hearts of all men and women who work for a living, and that means ninety-nine out of every hundred of us. It was he who said: "God must love the common people, for he made so many of them." Close by Westminster Abbey, the national shrine of England, you may see a statue of Lincoln—the only statue of an American President in that country. By his life and death he gave a new dignity to the labor of millions of black people in America. The free toil of all our citizens is creating greater wealth than slavery ever could have gained for the United States.

If the church is ever ashamed of its workers it is ashamed of its Christ. Once it endangered its life by denying the humble man of Nazareth. Together, the church and labor can win the world to the worship of a Father-Worker—the Father of Jesus the Carpenter-Christ.

This is the Gospel of Labor—
Ring it, ye bells of the kirk—
The Lord of love came down from above
To live with the men who work.
This is the rose that he planted
Here in the thorn cursed soil—
Heaven is blessed with perfect rest;
But the blessing of earth is toil.

Because of Our Unbelief

By E. G. Homrighausen

"And he did there not many mighty works because of their unbelief." Matt. 13:58.

MIGHTY works! This is what characterized the ministry and career of Jesus. He came, and purposed to *do* something. And wherever he went things happened. Jesus was a man of deeds. He spoke few words, but his words were always commentaries upon his actions. His words are acts in themselves. He was what he spoke.

It was said of Oliver Cromwell, the rugged leader of Old Ironsides in the Puritan revolution in England, that "he spoke deeds." His words were weighty with the authority of his actions. His thinking was active thought. His thinking was not theoretical but biological. It was part and parcel of the fabric of his total self. His words were always specific and definite. Almost all his words were descriptive of deeds and life in action. He was a human being who lived in this world and did not waste his time in futile illusions.

In a similar sense, Jesus spoke with authority and not as the theoretical and book-learned scribes. They hashed over old theories that had grown dry as dust. They had knowledge, but their knowledge was second-hand. It was a knowledge of terms and definitions and ancient dogmas. Jesus' knowledge was fresh with contemporary meaning. People who heard him were amazed at the novel and unusual power of his words.

I have often been amazed at the rapid movement of the writings of the New Testament. The writers were evidently not interested in writing "best sellers." They were not paid by an editor according to the line. They were not interested in literary style. There are few adjectives in the whole Bible. It is filled with nouns and verbs, and as such it is fast-moving, and breath-taking. These men did not write for wealth or fame or popularity. They were flaming witnesses describing the unusual divine action that took place in this world in the personality of a God-apprehended man.

The New Testament writers were amazed at the power of Jesus to reach and invade life with divine authority. They were aware of his power to mediate the reality of God. They spent no time philosophically explaining who Jesus was. They had no systematic theology about the Holy Spirit, the nature of Jesus, the method of salvation. But they tell with naive simplicity and urgent enthusiasm about the way in which God had got hold of them through the strange personality of Jesus.

I

Yes, wherever Jesus went deeds, "works," took place. He came to do something for and in and to men. His ministry was one of action. What strange changes took place in people's lives around him! They became as people possessed of new knowledge and possibilities. They possessed a boldness that some thought blasphemy,

and an enthusiasm that some thought mild drunkenness. Jesus "worked" in them.

The miracles of Jesus are not to be considered freakish deeds done to win the applause of men. They were not magicians' tricks meant to make men wonder and fear. They were deeds of mercy meant always to reveal the Godhood of God and his sovereignty in the midst of life and history. They were acted parables, in which he sought to illustrate the burden of his calling and purpose.

Modern scholars are telling us that the whole life of Jesus is set in a conflict, and that his works were all meant to dethrone the demonic powers that hold and enslave men to their hurt and destruction. His whole life was one of war against satanic powers. His greatest work was his lifelong struggle on behalf of men in which he defeated, in a final and terrific battle, the satanic will that was set upon defeating the will of God for men. And all his lesser works, whether that of forgiveness of sin, or the healing of a man born blind, belong to that category of "works" done for men to free them from the slavery of powers that were not from God.

After all, the greatest miracles of God are not those wrought in the physical world, but in the personal world. The creation of a good and righteous man, who is human too, still is a greater thing than the building of the San Francisco bridge! The one may astound people with the genius of man, the other always astonishes men with the possibility of God in a human life. A changed man is still a mightier miracle than the tallest skyscraper. To this end Jesus' miracles were always aimed at reaching the will of man.

Early Christians were puzzled concerning the nature of Jesus. They hardly knew who this Strange Man could be, since he was able to do the works of God in men's lives. The doctrine of the virgin birth is not a sophistic dogma, it is a sincere description of a fact. That fact is that no natural cause could ever have conceived him and his work. He was conceived of God alone, of the Holy Spirit which is God in action in human life.

It is not surprising that early Christians speak less of God and more of Christ. They practically identify the two. And so should we! The God I know is not the God of natural processes, not the God of trees and flowers. The God I know is the God who was at work in Jesus the Christ. There is the only one God I can trust. He speaks my language, he meets me on my human plane, he shares my lot, he is personal and ethical and loving. I do not know much about the God of nature but I do know something of this God who mysteriously incarnated himself in the flesh of Jesus of Nazareth and has the power to reach me; the power to work in me and to make me aware of that which is beyond me.

That God is a God of miracle, a God of divine "work." The Good News he brings is not of this world, and the release he offers me is beyond that of any mortal. He thaws out my icy will and motives, and actually begins to recreate within me a new person altogether, whose inner furnishings are altered and whose outer world takes on a new meaning. His greatest work is not in stilling storms on the sea of Galilee, but in his power thereby to show me the One who can still the greater storms of my sinful soul. This God in Jesus finds me!

We need to see that this Jesus made a publican taxgatherer into an apostle and Gospel-writer. He made a persecuting Saul of Tarsus into a flaming fool of God, Paul. He literally brought a new world of human possibilities within sight and reach. He was a miracle worker of the highest type. And he has been doing wonderful deeds ever since. What would John say now, after nineteen hundred years, about the things which he did! Surely it would take many more books to tell about the deeds he has inspired in the earth through these long centuries.

More and more, I am astonished at the miracle of Jesus, not merely as a personality whom I cannot explain on natural grounds: I am astonished at the miraculous changes he has brought to people's lives. His message of forgiveness for the honest and repentant sinner was never heard before his time. Even today, the other religions of the world know nothing of it. What a message was his message concerning God as Father, the Living One who was their shepherd. The message of forgiveness and eternal meaningfulness for life was not a message; it was a mighty "work" which he worked in men's lives. And all great doctrines are descriptions of divine action on behalf of men.

II

But this doer of divine deeds can fail. Even today he can be blocked in his benevolent desires to release men to a new freedom and a new humanity. Even today the sun of righteousness can be darkened by men who prefer to draw the curtains and live by their own light—which proves to be darkness indeed. Even today men can refuse his gift, his offer to work in them the works of God. Even today men can by unbelief refuse his gift, his release, his healing.

He does not invade the precinct of our wills to persuade us. He will confront us with signs and inferences, and atmospheres and hopes and horizons, but the power of decision is left to us. It is a terrible power he allows us, the power to believe or to disbelieve. He is just outside the gates of our lives, but unless we open, all his divine power will not save us, but will pass us by to our condemnation. But to those who open, he still promises a peace and a poise that the world cannot give. To those who open he offers an outlook upon life which even the wisest of men could not create. To those who open he gives a power over sin and hell that is as a miracle to those who experience it.

But these works are not seen by the worldly, the indifferent or the irreverent. He performed no miracles before the profane Herod. For Herod looked for deeds to amuse himself. Jesus refused to make his wondrous power a spectacle for the worldly wise. He performed no mighty works before Pilate. How could he? Pilate was the worldly-wise man of affairs. Pilate was too preoccupied with his expedient scheming. Now and then, it seems as if he might see the implications of Jesus for the divine things of life—but Pilate dared not give himself too much to the wisdom and truth of this man from Galilee. But again the door was closed and

Pilate missed his greater birthday into the Kingdom of the blessed.

Jerusalem, that city of the temple, of religious scholarship, of prophetic tradition, of sacred memories, did not see many works of Jesus. Jesus rarely went there because he knew he did not have entrance into men who had the realities of religion encased in human formulae, rituals, dogmas and ethical codes. He wept over that city because he would have gathered its people unto himself and shown them the greater works of God. He came unto his own "things," but his own people would not receive him. "Things" are not to blame. The temple

E. G. Homrighausen

was not to blame. It was the people, unbelieving people, who thwarted his power and his willingness.

The resurrected Christ was not seen by unbelievers. It takes more than historical and scientific facts to "see" the risen Christ. It was only the believers who saw him in his resurrected glory. "Babes and sucklings," "publicans and harlots," with no pharisaical superiority, were vouchsafed a glimpse into the eternal world. And still it is true that only those with believing hearts enter into the holy of holies.

III

What is this blighting power that stops Christ from doing his work? Yea more, what nails him to the tree, what makes his presence so ineffectual?

What is unbelief? John's Gospel makes it very clear that the real issue between Jesus and man is that of belief or unbelief, either faith or lack of faith. To those who believe, there comes through the open door all that he is, all that he has said and promised. They accept it and build anew upon his foundation. To them, the Sun of Righteousness dawns as upon a new day. They allow the reality that was in him to do its work in their lives.

Carlyle once said that those who would know other persons intimately must fulfill two laws. They must identify themselves with the other person, and surrender themselves to him. To those who have believing hearts, there comes the power of intimate knowledge, for they are surrendered to and identified with Christ. They become true conductors of his power, and thus conduct it into the world.

The unbeliever will never "know" the power of Christ. And the power of Christ is the power of God in him. It is God at work for men in human flesh and the human situation. What is unbelief? It is the closed mind. It is the stiff neck. Unbelief is found in self-conceit which knows it all, which does not acknowledge anything beyond its ken and power. It is found in the person guilty of what Professor Tillich calls "self-sufficient finitude." He has made his finite mind the absolute. Unbelief is a type of contented humanism—or orthodoxy.

But more: unbelief is a type of intellectualism that has made human reason an end in itself. It spells reason with a capital R, and regards the rational process of the individual as the last word on any subject. It has defined everything, and refuses to acknowledge anything beyond that which has been tabulated.

Unbelief is to be found in a church and in churchmen who have God all boxed-up in their cold creeds and their rituals. They fume and stew when new horizons dissolve the old. They fear the prophet, the man of faith who does not live by sight. Unbelief makes the church a closed system, and thereby regards the human church as the absolute custodian of the precious truth of God. That, too, is a type of omnipotent humanism.

In the life of Jesus it was religious people, who, in spite of their religiousness, were his greatest enemies and shouted loudest for his death. Religion can be the worst spectacle in the world when it makes itself absolute and even refuses to allow the truth not only a hearing but obedience.

No one has put it better than Dostoievsky, in his *The Brothers Karamazov,* in which the medieval church is portrayed as an absolute custodian of the truth. People are attracted to Jesus. One day the Grand Inquisitor finds Jesus among a group of heretics about to be burned in a squalid Spanish town. At night the Inquisitor addresses Jesus in his cell: "Art Thou He? Do not answer. You come to trouble our work. I shall condemn you once more to be burned, and the masses will poke coals glowing around the stake." And there is no reply. Hereupon the Inquisitor says: "You have rendered everything to the pope. Therefore do not come again or trouble us any more. You have not now even the right to add anything to what you once said. You have left us the job and given us the right to bind and loosen. Three powers conquer the revolting conscience: Miracle, Mystery and Authority. But you declined them all when you were tempted by the great and terrible Spirit. . . . We have corrected your mistakes. We are not with you, but with him who tempted you and have accepted from him the power and the sword. . . . We

improved what you did and tomorrow I shall burn you."

No answer comes from Jesus who only walks slowly toward the Inquisitor and kisses him on the lips. This is his reply. Whereupon the Inquisitor quivers, opens the door and says: "Go and come nevermore—hear, nevermore!" Dostoievsky was one who revolted against the ghastly attempt on the part of man to organize the Eternal by any human agency, which agency then regards itself as lord and god. Unbelief!

Divine power is much like electricity. Electricity is mysterious, unknown. It manifests itself in many ways, as light, heat and energy. But electricity must have channels that conduct the current, otherwise it is stopped. It must have "belief-ful wires" upon which to transfer itself. So it is with God's truth and purpose. Wherever people conduct in a sense of humble beliefulness the truth of God they may notice through such acknowledgment a renewal of life in true divine purposefulness. It does not make them divine or more than human, but it makes them human with a purpose and a power not of themselves. But what has all this to do with us? Everything.

IV

The power of Christ in the church's life is not felt as it should be, primarily because men do not believe. They say they do, but nothing happens. They are caught in the grip of paralyzing unbelief which manifests itself in the most subtle ways. This is so difficult to believe in a day of secularism, mechanism, criticism and materialism. The great ages of faith arouse in us a great hunger. But, as Walter Lippmann once wrote, it is not that we won't believe, it is because we can't quite believe.

Cynicism is a type of unbelief. Proud intellectualism is another type of refined unbelief. Ecclesiasticism is another form of self-sufficient finitude that makes the human church into a divine fetish, which has lost its sense of expectancy and humility over against God. Recently one has said that next to the folly of trying to deny God is that of trying to explain him! We make Christ so rational and reasonable that we have emasculated the divine in him which forever shows us to heights we have not attained, and perhaps never shall attain.

We are caught in a practical type of atheism. It is not the blatant type of an Ingersoll who vowed there was no God. Our atheism is that which does not deny with argument but with daily conduct of life—the existence of anything beyond our knowledge. God is not taken into account as the worker of divine works within us that are even greater than bridges.

Our animalism, our criticism, our self-sufficiency is of a such nature that it denies the existence of dimensions beyond that which we can scientifically tabulate. We live with the perspective of earthworms, when the very word for man, "Anthropos," means the upward-looking animal.

One of my good friends once remarked that the ambition of many college students was to reach a sort of detachment from life whereby they could look down upon their age with the calm complacency of a spectator! In short, they hoped to reach a goal of success, a type of worldly security, that should make them masters of all they surveyed. Is this unbelief? Is this a type of self-contained individualism that is all too prevalent?

Lynn Harold Hough declared that our civilization is falling to pieces because we lack a sufficient number of great believers. But to believe one must believe in something one can utterly trust, something higher than any earthly possibility. For this created earth does not contain its own purpose. Life, true human life, is that of faithful obedience even unto death to that which alone can give life its eternal meaningfulness. A life that revolves around itself is one of unbelief, and it will soon dig itself deep into its own subjectivism until it dies of utter selfishness.

V

Christ is standing at the doors of our generation with power to recreate this age and make it meaningful with divine purpose. But he is blocked by a wave of unbelief and conceit and selfish dickering about human rights and opinions. He has the power to sensitize life. He has the power to ennoble it, to dignify life with eternal sonship. He can restore the eternal dimension of life. He can save our souls. He has the truth to set us free, the hope to save us from despair, and the love to give us self-respect. There will be no works shown this age unless it repents and with utter faith penitently asks him to do his work in the men of this age.

But we will have to take him seriously. We will need to live believingly. We need to become shocked out of our complacency and our smug security. We will need to taste of the cross and its tragedy. We will need to see the utter extremity of life that dogs our existence from birth to the grave.

We will need to come to our senses, to be done with our blunt or refined unbelief and cry out: "Lord I believe, help Thou mine unbelief." We will need to come for better or worse upon his wonderful love, which alone can give us the power to live life out and through in the midst of bad circumstances. We will need to come to a decision, to a place where life is no more a matter of discussion, debate and easy talk.

We will need to act and do, and live by faith. Our silly illusions do not truly interpret life. We will need to come to a divine seriousness about life. We will need to exercise such faith as to follow him and seek to know him with serious eagerness. We need to come to the place where we will live every moment of life in a spirit of wonder that God's love is possible in the light of our sins.

In the lives of such people God has his greatest delight. And in and through them he does marvelous things unto his people in every age. For such children of the most high are perfectly human, and yet they express such meaningfulness of life as to redeem their fellows and their communities. Such persons are far from being stultified and atrophied: they are creative members of a new humanity who have the second Adam as their father. They are those who are raised from the dead!

We have found all the questions that can be found. It is time we gave up looking for questions and started looking for answers.—G. K. Chesterton.

So This Is College!

By Henry W. Snyder

Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life. Proverbs 4:23.

"SO THIS is college!" The expression came from the lips of a young man as he stood before the ivy-covered walls of an eastern college late one September afternoon. Then seating himself on a bench on the campus, he began to reminisce and meditate.

This was the place and this the moment toward which he had been looking for years; for this he had been saving, and his parents sacrificing; what would it mean to him? He had come here to get an education; but what is education? His meager Latin reminded him that the word *educo* means to lead out, the presumption being that he would be led out of ignorance into light. What light? And that question has been, and still is, on the lips of thousands. We ask it now. May I lay down as our premise what I regard as the *sine qua non* of the whole question? It is this: *The heart of education is the education of the heart.* That is my text: "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

The marginal reading of the American Version is significant, "Keep thy heart above all that thou guardest," for it indicates that in the mind of the writer the "heart" must have been regarded as one's greatest treasure, the citadel of one's being. I hope we shall not need to quibble over the physiology or the psychology of the term "heart"; sometimes the Hebrew placed the seat of affection in the kidneys, or as he called them, "the reins"; sometimes in the heart. When I use the term today, I mean that moral phase of a man's being that causes him to react favorably or unfavorably toward good and evil; in short, his philosophy of life.

MAN NOT FOURFOLD, BUT A UNIT

I am not by any means a pessimist, and certainly am not of the belief that the Golden Age is in the past, or that the youth of today is tobogganing toward the dogs; yet I do fear that some are developing a false philosophy; they are making a hideous mosaic out of a piece of falsehood gathered in the classroom of some unscrupulous Philistine pedagogue; another taken from a group of their own misunderstandings, but attributed to the "out-of-date dominie" who occupies the home pulpit; then there is added the foulness of some social customs. The dishonest or deceitful acts of fellow students augment the collection; until finally they have constructed the picture of a destructive monster, and this they make their idol or fetish. "Extreme!" you say; not at all; in fact, not so uncommon.

What kind of being, after all, is man? We have been accustomed to speak of him as fourfold; in religious addresses we have stressed the fourfold life; we have perhaps overworked Luke 2:52. But is man fourfold? He is called a "social animal," "a thinking animal," "a talking animal." Is it not more nearly correct to regard him as a unit, a soul? Even the dichotomous "body and soul" may be open to question; for what is his body but the vehicle of the soul? I am rather inclined to think that the question boils itself down to this: How does man's soul express itself in the realm of the mental or the social or the physical? How can you absolutely separate these? They seem indissolubly bound together, thus confirming the thought of the unity of our being.

What will this college mean to my body, my physical being? Well, the answer varies. I may wear myself out with burning the candle at both ends in study or social life. Or I may accept the program that the college offers in gymnastics, athletics, military drill; and these either in moderation or in excess. There are

Henry W. Snyder

abundant opportunities for physical development and overdevelopment. I may emerge from college with a puny frame, the prey of every germ that comes along; or again, I may be a veritable giant of muscular activity. One thing is certain, unless my soul controls my physical being, I shall be no better than a worm or a brute. The heart of my physical education is the education of my heart.

A SOCIAL ANIMAL

Man has been defined as a "social animal," and much stress has been laid on his gregarious instincts. Certainly college does not lack opportunities of developing this social nature. Nor do we seek to minimize its importance; the introvert today is as much out of tune with God's plan as was the hermit of medieval times. A school principal is credited with the statement that he would rather have his daughter know how to enter a drawing room gracefully than to know how to solve a mathematical problem. That thought is somewhat extreme, and such a sentiment is largely responsible for so

many young women with drug-store beauty and empty-store brains.

On the other hand, I am very much impressed with what Dr. Drummond said in his *The Greatest Thing in the World* under the heading "Courtesy." Here it is: "You can put the most untutored persons into the highest society, and if they have a reservoir of Love in their heart they will not behave themselves unseemly. They simply cannot do it." Such a person may never have seen the walls of a college, but in one visit he will be able to make more friends than the other type. There is but one conclusion to be drawn, and again it is: The heart of social education is the education of the heart.

LEARNING TO KNOW

At this point someone interposes with the statement, "I have not come to college to be either a pugilist or an Adonis; I have not come to learn to be a social butterfly; I have come to develop my mind, to learn to *know* things." True, that should be one's primary purpose in attending college, though even here we would remind you of a former statement about the impossibility of dividing man's unity. Consider, however, that knowledge alone may be as dynamite in the hands of a child. Here is one of the greatest problems of our modern internationalism; the discoveries of science used in present-day warfare have resulted in wholesale murder. If there is any place in all the world where a right attitude is necessary, that place is in the realm of knowledge, so that again we must say: The heart of academic education is the education of the heart.

So we need to watch our likes and dislikes, our loves and our hatreds, our sympathies and our revulsions. It is not how strong I am that counts, but what feeling my heart entertains toward my fellow men. It is not what I know that counts, but what my heart leads me to do with that knowledge. Go to college, young man, young woman; learn all you can about the gospel for the body —and there is such a gospel. We still insist, *"Sana mens in corpore sano."* Cultivate the grace and ease, the *savoir-faire* of the cultured person; master all the knowledge of arts and sciences that you can; but in every one of these things, "keep thy heart above all things that thou guardest, for out of it are the issues of life."

So this is college—to learn and to labor and to love—all in order to live the philosophy that the *heart of education is the education of the heart.*

Why Armaments?

By Edgar Blake

WHY armaments? Our military leaders answer that armaments are necessary for national security, that armies and navies are the guarantors of peace.

This answer is as false as it is futile. Every page of history stamps it a lie. "Whatsoever a nation soweth that shall it also reap." This is the law of nature and the law of God. Nations that prepare for war reap war. Mr. Coolidge, several years ago, solemnly said: "The American government and people are convinced that competitive armaments constitute one of the most dangerous and contributing causes of international suspicion and discord and are calculated eventually to lead to war."

Europe spent forty billion dollars in forty years on armaments, professedly in the interest of peace and security. Every dollar spent on armaments weakened the structure of peace. Every expenditure on armies and navies undermined the foundations of security. In 1914 the mad race culminated. The colossal structure crumpled and collapsed, burying Europe under an avalanche of destruction and despair. Ten million lives were sacrificed on the battlefield. Twenty-five million other lives were taken as the direct and indirect toll of the terrible strife. More than $400,000,000,000, the accumulated savings of centuries, were wiped out and wasted.

Nations came out of the war broken and bankrupt, buried under a mountain of debt from which it is doubtful if they can ever dig out. Industry was disorganized, trade ruined, finances depleted to the vanishing point. The chaos in which the whole world has been weltering during the last few years, with no relief in sight, is the outcome of the World War. Civilization is threatened. All human kind is suffering from wounds that ages will not heal.

The war that was to end war has proved only a prelude to another. A greater war is in the offing. The war that was to make the world safe for democracy has resulted in dictatorships for two-thirds of mankind. Fascism, nazism and sovietism are threatening liberty and democracy everywhere. America is not safe. Our country is endangered by the same destructive forces that are destroying human freedom everywhere. If our liberties are lost, if democracy in America is destroyed, its destruction will be directly traceable to the war of insanity that undermined the foundations of freedom that the sacrifices of the centuries had created for man's well-being. Had there been no armies and navies, no arms and armaments, no propaganda and preparation for war, the world would be at peace today, prosperous and happy, instead of being broken and cowed with fear of another and more terrible calamity.

WHO WANTS WAR?

Who wants war? Not the common people. The folks who do the fighting, who face the slaughter, who give their lives to pay the price of others' greed and folly want peace. They have no quarrel with their neighbors. They cherish no enmities. They harbor no grudges. They have no wrongs that they thirst to avenge. They want peace. The soldiers who bear arms and fire shot and shell to kill their "enemies" have no grievance against their opponents on the other side. They are the dumb instruments of designing politicians and statesmen. They are the innocent executioners of other men's greed.

President Roosevelt declared that 90 per cent of the people of America and of the nations of the world want peace. It is a greedy and brutal minority who want war—men with careers to realize, with ambitions to appease, with lust for power and profits to satisfy, who preach patriotism (God save the mark!), who salute the flag and sing the national anthem and demand an

"adequate national defense." It is these who want war and get it at the price of others' blood.

Who wants war? The professional militarists—the gentlemen who bedeck themselves with braid and buttons, who puff and strut and receive salutes, in whose presence others stand at attention—the gentlemen who do their fighting behind the lines, who send others to death and themselves gallop off the field in glory.

One of them denounced as "Judas Iscariots" Americans who are opposed to war. "Pacifism and cowardice," said he, "are synonymous terms; therefore, one can readily believe that the seed from which a pacifist was conceived was originally yellow in color, for certainly the pacifist is yellow all through in his attitude toward society." "Pacifists approve the signing the slacker's oath, the rape of religion, the subsidizing of the press, and the defeat of the Constitution of the United States. They approve any method that could destroy the Stars and Stripes and put the Red Flag at the head of the mast."

One may be forgiven if he treats such witless sentiments as these as the silly vaporings of a distempered mind.

One of our most distinguished generals says: "A military spirit, which alone can create and civilize a state, is absolutely essential to national defense and national perpetuity . . . the more warlike the spirit of the people, the less need for a large standing army . . . every male brought into existence should be taught from infancy that the military service of the Republic carries with it honor and distinction, and his very life should be permeated with the ideal that even death itself may become a boon when a man dies that a nation may live and fulfill its destiny." The general does not make it clear whether military training should begin at six months or at six years as Signor Mussolini requires. His reference to "infancy" would indicate the army's preference for babies. The "boon" of death which some of our military leaders crave for others seems not to have endangered their own lives over much during the World War when there was plenty of killing where so many of them were not.

NEW RULES FOR WAR

It has been suggested that the following "rules" should be adopted for all future wars:

That all congressmen and senators voting for war be given the choice of enlisting in the shock troops or being shot on the Capitol steps.

That each battleship, cruiser, destroyer and submarine shall carry as excess baggage one or more stockholders in battleship concerns.

That all manufacturers of war supplies be hanged when their profits reach the million-dollar mark.

That all holy men who announce to their congregations that "God is fighting with us" be dispatched to interview God personally on the subject and find out.

That admirals and generals, presidents, kings and emperors, cabinet officers and politicians who promote war for profits and glory be placed in the first-line trenches to begin the fighting.

From an article in the Michigan Christian Advocate.

A Pastoral Prayer

By Claude Allen McKay

O THOU who art the source of power, the author of wisdom and the fountain of friendship, we seek Thee. Often we are afraid in the presence of Thy power except as we recognize Thy wisdom. We are speechless in the presence of Thy wisdom except as we remember Thy goodness. Often we are ashamed in the presence of Thy goodness except that in Thee we know mercy and truth have met together.

All too eagerly we have sought the sources of the power that turns wheels and changes our environment, and Thou hast given us our reward in bountiful harvests and boundless horizons for which we give Thee thanks. But may we more eagerly seek the sources of the power that clarifies ideas and ideals, that purifies moods and motives, that refines attitudes and outlooks, that changes the taste and tone of life.

Long and diligently, O Lord, have we sought for knowledge, but with all our knowledge may we find wisdom also. We have been seekers after the truth that makes men free from servitude; may we also find the truth that makes men free from selfishness. If we are ever learning but never coming to a knowledge of Thy truth, interpret for us, personally, day by day, the path to greater living. Thus may we be partakers with Thee in the fullness of life.

Always, O God, Thou hast been our Father but we knew it not. We thank Thee, therefore, for Jesus, Thy beloved Son, our Elder Brother, in whom we see Thy Fatherhood revealed and our brotherhood realized. We gratefully recognize in his life, spelled out in language that we can understand, Thy power, Thy wisdom and Thy goodness. In his practice of that trinity of virtues we are greatly heartened. By his footprints on life's pathway we are guided. By his comradeship on our Emmaus pilgrimage Thy word is opened for us anew and our hearts burn within us in wonder and gratitude.

May we be kindled anew with our Master's sense of Thy continuing presence in every day's living. May his outreaching heart of kindliness to all his Father's children in every circumstance, and his outstretched hand of helpfulness toward all in need, be our example and inspiration. Thus may his word and life be our beckoning cloud by day and our pillar of fire by night, as we move on in our wilderness wanderings, seeking here and now cities with worthy foundations, whose builder and maker is God. So we open our spirits to Thee now, our Father God, for Thy endowment of power to live our prayer, and for thy benediction of peace to assure us that our life is hid with Christ in Thee. Amen.

The Ministerial Mien

By John A. McAfee

IT WAS a lowly louse on a lady's bonnet in church that called forth these true and pointed lines from that great Scotch bard and poet of the people, Bobbie Burns:

O wad some Pow'r the giftie gie us
To see oursels as ithers see us!
It wad frae mony a blunder free us,
An' foolish notion!
What airs in dress an' gait wad lea'e us,
An' ev'n devotion!

It is a question whether the bard was more distracted from worship by the crawling beastie or by the haughty lady. Perhaps he was looking beyond both to the man in the pulpit when he wrote these words. Certainly no man has a greater need of seeing himself as others see him than does the preacher; and few men find this particular task more difficult.

Among my many foolish desires there has always lurked one—that some day, unobserved by myself or anyone else, I might slip into a service of worship that I myself was conducting and in which I was preaching and that I might sit there as a very official observer. Could I but perform such a feat I am sure I would be a wiser, though I am afraid not a happier, man. The experience would prove a very salutary though perhaps a very disillusioning one. It is not only in his pulpit that the minister needs to study himself. Realizing full well my entire lack of qualification to cast the first stone, or any other stone, I still think it would be helpful if we ministers would study our ministerial mien.

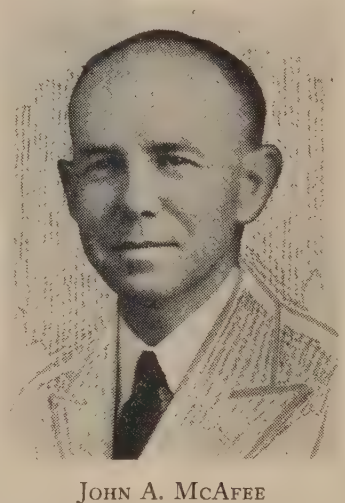
• *Marks of the Profession*

To some degree every man carries the marks of his profession. To a greater degree than any other, unless it be the teacher, the clergyman carries the characteristic marks of his calling. My wife insists, and that not without some justification, that she can spot a preacher as far as she can see one. There are those partially indefinable marks of the profession with which most of us are branded. These do not help us in our work but rather they often hinder us. This I know, that my friends in the ministry who are doing the best and most constructive work are exactly the ones who are the least ministerial in their bearing. The profession does something to us and that something does not make us any more effective ministers.

Perhaps there is a slight trace of sour grapes in the lines, but there is far more than that in them. I wish Emerson had not written these words: they rise up in my memory quite frequently and always to torment me.

I like a church, I like a cowl,
I love a prophet of the soul,
And on my heart monastic aisles
Fall like sweet strains, or pensive smiles;
Yet not for all his faith can see,
Would I that cowléd churchman be.

Emerson must have seen that the cowl did something to the spirit of the man, something that made it less lovely than it would otherwise have been. Being a professional holy man is fraught



John A. McAfee

with many and serious dangers. Oliver Wendell Holmes is reported to have said that he might have been a minister had not a certain preacher looked and talked so much like an undertaker. The clerical cut of mind and the clerical cut of conduct are not particularly inviting. We may do our best to obliterate the distinguishing marks of our profession, but few of us succeed. We may eschew clerical garb; we may even dress in our pulpits like successful business men or head waiters; but the marks are still upon us. However we may dislike it, that ugly division of the human race into men, women and ministers still holds enough truth to live.

• *Holy Tones a Grievous Symptom*

A good elocution teacher may be able to take the holy tones out of our voices: nothing less than the spirit of Christ can take them out of our lives. How often we have heard an otherwise perfectly good sermon made largely ineffective by the sonorous and pompous tones in the preacher's voice. We do wish he would talk to us instead of preach at us. Few of us but are sinners at times. Unbidden and unbeknown to us the holy tones creep in and vitiate our message. If these tones were but superficial faults we would not need concern ourselves greatly. Usually, however, they are but the symptoms of a deep disease.

The one thing that is most conducive to holy tones is the rising inflection at the end of the sentence. Unconsciously we betray a lack of confidence and certainty. Not having sufficient faith either in our message or ourselves we betray our spiritually impoverished condition by the tones of our voices. Just so we display that same failure in our actions.

• *Making Ourselves Impressive*

The tones of our voices and our lives betray our effort to make ourselves impressive. Some men resort to profanity to make themselves seem important. In much the same spirit and for the same purpose the preacher resorts to other subterfuges.

Dr. Leslie Weatherhead tells of an American preacher who covers a vast ignorance with a pompous style. Once in a certain meeting this man did what it is his custom to do. Instead of coming in with the other speakers he came in late. When the others come in, the people ask, "Where is Dr. X?" This is one point gained. Further, the solitary entrance brings the doctor a glory undimmed by having it shared with others. Frequently in audiences readily deceived by show, it brings him a round of applause all to himself. On this particular occasion, as the dramatic entry was made, a little girl watched the pompous figure pass with an assumed unself-consciousness which completely deceived her. She turned to her brother, a theological student, and in an awed whisper asked, "Who is that?" In a similar whisper, but this time assumed, came the answer: "Sh! That is God's eldest brother." Dr. Weatherhead adds, "I should think the angels in heaven chuckled with holy glee."

Trying to make ourselves impressive most of us succeed only in making ourselves ridiculous.

• *Assumptions of Authority*

We all like the man who speaks with authority. Most of us do not follow the man who speaks ex cathedra on all subjects, who considers his passing comment as the law and the gospel.

In the great matters of faith we should speak with a "Thus said the Lord," but we should remember that at times the Lord speaks through others as well as through us.

In a certain church the minister got into rather serious difficulty, so serious that he had to seek another flock. When one of the elders was asked what the trouble with Dr. A. was, he replied: "The trouble with Dr. A. was that he was always on the Lord's side, and it is awfully hard to work with a man who is *always* on the Lord's side."

It is, of course, a very remote possibility, but it still is a possibility, that you and I might be wrong, at least in some small details.

• *The 'Unco Guid,' Rigidly Righteous*

The rigidly righteous make most of us sick. At least, the impression they make upon us is not generally favorable.

The rigid righteous is a fool,
The rigid wise anither.

Doubtless few of us, if any, feel in our hearts that we are any better than other men. Here, however, as in so many other places, we must avoid the appearance of evil. The important consideration is as to whether or not we give others the impression that we are righteous above all others. It is, of course, easy to swing to the other extreme and to become a hale-fellow-well-met, and thus to fail in our mission. The inveterate story-teller and back-slapper is not in position to be the greatest help when people need help. For the good people in the pew to recall a bit of buffoonery on the part of the preacher certainly does not enhance the effect of the sermon.

Stopford Brooke wrote in his diary: "There is a settled melancholy at the back of the greater number of [their] ministers. Most of them have never lived. They know little or nothing of the world—excellent men, but profoundly ignorant of any human nature save what they find in themselves and in their wives. How can they preach? The one thing to preach about they do not know." There is too much truth in this suggestion. For young men to go through college, and seminary, and directly into the ministry, without any direct contact with human nature in the raw, is a questionable procedure. I have always had sympathy for the preacher in the proverbial story who, while riding on the train, was pestered by the inebriate who insisted that he did not believe in the Bible, in God, or in religion. Finally, looking up from his reading, the clergyman is reported to have said: "Oh, all right! All right! Go to hell;.but don't make so much fuss about it!"

When we appear to others to be overly good we erect barriers that make it impossible for us to serve them as we should.

• *The Deadening Effect Of Deference*

It is not good for the minister's soul that there is paid to him a deference which is not earned. God forbid that we should ever attempt to demand the deference due the cloth! Dignity which must be defended is not worth defending. It is too bad for most of us that at so many functions we have places of honor. Far better would it be for the minister if more frequently he were just another citizen. Men grow uncomfortable in our presence.

If you are a person, as I am, who gets his exercise by following the wayward and tantalizing golf ball, you have had this experience. You have played a round of golf with men who did not know your profession. Their language was very expressive but not altogether the kind that good little boys should use. Later your companions have discovered that you were a preacher and they have come and apologized for their conduct. When this occurs to me the apology makes me far more uncomfortable than the profanity. Who am I that my ears must be guarded against the sound of such naughty words?

The devastating effect on our character of unearned deference is very great, and an effect against which we should ever be on our guard.

When we hear it said that someone acts like a preacher it is usually with a sinister connotation. The ready answer is that we have no business to act in any other way, but we know this is not the complete answer. There just left my study a young lawyer who said to me, "You have the happy faculty of not acting like a preacher." I am not quite sure whether to accept this as a compliment or not. I am sure that he intended it to be such. What concerns me is that to him, and I know to countless others, the ministerial manner is displeasing, and so the influence upon his life is impaired.

• *Conduct Becoming a Clergyman*

As ministers of Jesus Christ we should be very jealous of our influence. We know that the most effective work we do is in our contact with individual men and women. So we should constantly study ourselves lest by faults which we can control we fail in our task. We have no moral right ever to step out of character. The Bishop of Chester one day reproved one of his incumbents for drunkenness. "But, my lord," protested the surprised cleric, "I was never drunk on duty." "On duty," thundered the bishop; "pray, sir, when is a clergyman not on duty?" "True, my lord," stammered the culprit, "I — er — never thought of that."

Certainly no man can lay down rules of conduct for others. I question if many of us can lay down rules for ourselves. We could, I am convinced, make our ministry more effective if we did take more thought of our mien, not because of any selfish desire to please men but because of our ambition the better to touch men for our Lord.

The Church and Youth

YOUNG people today are not hostile to the church; it simply bores them. There is nothing about it which compels their admiration and stirs their enthusiasm. "Rubbish," they say, sweeping out the sacred objects with which they may have been equipped in childhood, symbols they believe outworn and discarded, thereby wounding those to whom they mean so much. The day comes at school or college when the youth turns on the church. It seems to him a survival of a dying past rather than a creator of dawning tomorrow. Others complain of its futility. Why, with its professed faith in a God of love, has it done so little to end war, to abolish needless poverty, to banish class strife and racial prejudice, and to bring to pass that brotherhood of which it has talked so grandiosely?

When this mood passes, however, the young people are on the way to a larger intercourse with the living God than even their elders enjoyed. Many of these young men and women see that, say what you will, in the church is a company of people, very faulty and not too intelligent, it is true, who cherish the loftiest hopes for our world, and who believe in a spiritual universe beyond it. While Jesus had not a word to say about economic and political arrangements in his world, about conditions which seem to us intolerable today, he had a priceless spiritual message for a distinctive life. He apparently offered no solutions for the personal questions of his followers, or for the public problems of the hour. He relieved them of no hard work in thought, in study, or in experimentation. His chief concern was with God and in drawing from God spiritual resources with which men could achieve wisdom and power to achieve a great work in the world.

Christianity is not the cult of a heroic man, but the worship of God, who has unveiled himself in this man Jesus.

HENRY SLOANE COFFIN.

THE church fails when it teaches without action. If the church of today is to have justification for living, it must act for world peace.

RABBI M. BERMAN.

PROTESTANTISM must free itself from capitalism. The system of free enterprise is splendid, but to link religion with it is wrong.

WILLIAM P. MERRILL.

• WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE •

Rev. CARL KNUDSEN *ministers to the* Church of the Pilgrimage, Plymouth, Mass. He is known for his keen awareness of the social implications of the gospel, having been for a time chairman of the New England Regional Committee on Social Action of the Congregational and Christian Churches. A few years ago he published a book entitled "Renewed by the Spirit."

Early pastorates of Rev. KING D. BEACH were in Detroit, Grand Rapids and Chicago. For several years he ministered at the First Methodist Church, Baltimore; it was in the first building of this church that the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized. His present pastorate is First Methodist in Tacoma, Wash. Mr. Beach was educated at Albion College, the University of Pennsylvania, Columbia and Union Seminary.

Rev. JOHN A. MACCALLUM *comes of a* family of preachers, being the 23d member of immediate family connection to be ordained in the Presbyterian ministry. Since 1910 he has been pastor of the Walnut Street church in Philadelphia. He has been a leader in the field of social service: he has headed the board of directors of the Philadelphia Housing Association and has been a member of the Presbyterian Board of City Missions. Mr. MacCallum is Canadian born, and studied at Queen's University. Coming to the United States, he continued his education at Columbia and Union Seminary.

Following studies at Lynchburg College, Va., Rev. A. T. DEGROOT received A.B., M.A. and B.D. degrees from Butler University. Later he studied in France and for several summers at the University of Chicago. For four years he was assistant professor of Old Testament at Butler. Following a three year pastorate at Spencer, Ind., he went to Park Street Christian Church, Kalamazoo, Mich., where he still ministers.

Completing his seminary courses at Princeton, Rev. E. G. HOMRIGHAUSEN planned to take up teaching, but after a few months he found himself pastor of the English Reformed Church, Freeport, Ill. For nearly ten years he has ministered to the Carrollton Avenue Reformed Church in Indianapolis. He has pursued graduate work at the University of Chicago, Iowa State University, Butler University and other schools, He has taught at Butler. Mr. Homrighausen is a confirmed Barthian, and has translated many of the works of Barth for publication.

Since 1929 Rev. HENRY W. SNYDER *has* ministered at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Washington, D. C. He came to the Capital city from Johnstown, Pa., where he was pastor for eleven years. He led in the building of a half-million dollar plant for the Johnstown church. For many years Mr. Snyder was a member of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Lutheran Church. His education was received at Johns Hopkins and at the Lutheran Theological Seminary; he was a director of the seminary for several years.

Rev. EDGAR BLAKE *is bishop of the* Methodist Episcopal Church, in the Detroit area.

Rev. CLAUDE ALLEN MCKAY *ministers* to the First Congregational Church, Binghamton, N. Y.

Rev. JOHN A. MCAFEE *is pastor of the* New Providence Presbyterian Church, Maryville, Tenn.

TITLES AND TEXTS

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

JOHN F. C. GREEN, Congregational, McKeesport, Pa. "The Divine Designer." Heb. 3:4—"For every house has a builder, and the builder of the universe is God." (Goodspeed)

FRED SMITH, Welborn Community, Kansas City, Kan. "A Dream in the Making." Matt. 16:18—"I will build my church."

WINSTON TREVER, Haven Methodist, Jerome, Ariz. "A Ticket to Nowhere." Jon. 1:3—"So he paid his fare . . . to go with them from the presence of the Lord."

CLARENCE E. MACARTNEY, First Presbyterian, Pittsburgh, Pa. "Your Underground Life." I Pet.—"The hidden man of the heart."

T. REAVELEY GLOVER, Public Orator Cambridge University. "Jesus Christ—Placarded!" Gal. 3:1—"O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath evidently been set forth, crucified among you."

G. MERRILL LENOX, Judson Memorial Baptist, Minneapolis, Minn. "Changing Our Tune." Psalm 40:3—"He hath put a new song in my mouth."

EDWARD W. SIMPSON, First Presbyterian, Sioux City, Ia. "A Theology for Democracy." John 8:32—"Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." (Preached at First Presbyterian Church, Chicago)

D. W. CHARLTON, First Baptist, East New Merket, Md. "The New Deal in Religion." Isa. 11:4—"But [he will] act with justice to the helpless and decide fairly for the humble; he will strike down the ruthless with his verdicts and slay the unjust with his sentences." (Moffatt)

JAMES E. BELL, First Baptist, Greeley, Colo. "The Ignorance of the Expert." Mark 12:10—"The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner."

J. W. PEARCE, First Baptist, Nevada, Mo. "Singing in the Wilderness." Psalm 137:4—"How can we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?"

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

. . . . . .
Title of sermon

. . . . . .
Text used (write out the text)

. . . . . .
Name of minister

. . . . . .
Name of church

. . . . . .
Address

THE EDITOR'S PAGE

The Event of the Month

THE two conferences of all the churches of Christendom, excepting only the Roman church, which took place in Oxford and Edinburgh, respectively, constitute what I regard as a major turning point in the history of our Christian faith. World conferences or councils have been held at intervals since the first one at Nicea in 325, A. D. Usually they have been held for the purpose of defining church doctrine, or averting a threatened schism. They have sometimes caused schisms. Never has a world council been called for the purpose of healing schisms—until the Lausanne conference of 1927, and its successor, the Edinburgh Conference of last month. At Edinburgh they considered whether there were sufficiently strong unities existing among the divided churches to bring them into a single body. At Oxford the problem faced was not that of the inner unity of the church, but that of its function in the social order. I cannot in this tiny space adequately express my enthusiasm for the work of these two conferences and the results achieved. It must suffice to say that in my judgment the church is entering upon an era of unprecedented significance in the life of mankind. The world is too strong for a divided church. The beginnings of a new Christendom are manifest in the bringing to birth of the World Council of Churches, a permanent organization of all non-Roman bodies throughout the world, resulting from the merging of the Life and Work (Oxford) movement and the Faith and Order (Edinburgh) movement.

A World Council of Christian Churches

The Book of the Month

I, YAHWEH. *By Robert Munson Grey. Willett, Clark & Company, $2.50.*

IT would be quite impossible for me to select any other book for this month, because I regard this novel as the most illuminating and fascinating piece of literature which I have come across in a long time. My unbounded enthusiasm is mixed with envy. I would rather have written *I, Yahweh* than any book I have read in many years. It is the story of Western civilization, beginning with Abraham and brought right down to Hitler and the coronation of George VI. The story is told not by an observer or a mere historian, but by the chief participant in the history—none other than Yahweh himself, the God whom the Jewish people gave to the Western world. It is Yahweh's autobiography. He tells of his beginnings on the Chaldean plain and in the household of Abraham, of his meeting with Moses and the Hebrew slaves at the sacred Mount, of the instruction he received at the hands of the great prophets, of his contact with the Galilean who "blasphemes" him by calling him *Satan,* of his conversion to Christianity and his departure from Palestine under Paul's persuasion, to become a universal God. Inspired by the Christian martyrs, he becomes a pacifist God, renouncing the sword, only to receive it again in a powerful scene when he is hypnotized by Constantine. Then follow the great episodes of Western history, centering in St. Francis, Galileo, Luther, the breakup of Christendom. Yahweh is confused and goes staggering through the Great War. In his search for a prophet to guide him he stumbles into a Billy Sunday meeting, a Buchman house party, an Aimie Macpherson revival, and at last falls under the spell of Hitler's doctrine of the folkic soul, which revives his tribal godship and causes him to renounce his Christian purpose to be a universal God. Taking the sword, he leads the nations to Armageddon. I venture a prediction: this book will be the theme of more controversy and of more sermons than any book that has appeared in many a day.

A Thought for the Month

DO we not conceive worship too much as an individual exercise? It truly is an individual act, but it is more: it is a communal act, an act of the whole Christian community celebrating perpetually the self-revelation which God made in Jesus Christ and which he keeps on making in his church. The man who claims that he can worship God in the solitude of the woods no doubt expresses a reality of the Christian faith, but it is not the same reality as that in which he engages in the public worship of the church. For worship is more than private communion with God. It should be distinguished from private prayer. We must outgrow that form of individualism which imprisons the whole of the Christian treasure in the inner life. The Christian faith is something more. It is expressed in a public act in which we all share. This act is worship. The whole body of Christian belief rests upon the concept of the solidarity of mankind. In guilt, in forgiveness, in redemption, in growing goodness, in service, in sacrifice, we are tied in with one another. The church is the community of this faith. Worship is the public celebration of the great facts upon which the Christian faith is founded, and upon which the Christian community ever nourishes its life. The church is by its nature a worshiping community. If the existence of the church means anything at all for its members and for mankind, its meaning is in its worship. This distinguishes it from all other societies. The other name for the church is community. And the other name for worship is communion. Communion is the community, as such, offering itself to God. This offering cannot be made by the individual alone; it requires that two or three be gathered together. And if there be no such communal offering there will be no such body as the Christian community. I am not playing with words, but speaking realities. The church lives in its worship. It cannot live outside its worship or in the neglect of it. Whatever the church is worth to itself and to mankind, worship is worth just that.

Worship as a Communal Act

Charles Clayton Morrison

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